DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 386 906 EC 304 300

TITLE The Emotional Price of Excellence. Abstracts of Selected Papers [from] The Annual Esther Katz Rosen Symposium on the Psychological Development of Gifted Children (5th, Lawrence, Kansas, September 8-9, 1995).

INSTITUTION Kansas Univ., Lawrence.

PUB DATE 95

NOTE 32p.

PUB TYPE Collected Works - General (020) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Adolescent Development; Child Development; Cognitive Development; *Coping; Educational Needs; Elementary Secondary Education; *Emotional Development; Emotional Disturbances; *Emotional Problems; *Gifted; Personality Traits; Psychological Characteristics; Self Concept; Student Development; *Talent

ABSTRACT

This monograph presents 29 abstracts on the emotional price of excellence in the psychological development of gifted children. Sample topics include: self-as-learner schemas, the impact of academic pressure on Japanese students, multicultural counseling practices for gifted minorities, coping strategies of gifted adolescents, suicide among gifted students, early language enrichment, gifted adolescent girls, psychological intensities in young gifted children, recruitment and retention of minority students in gifted education, meta-attention control, social support for science-talented rural girls, self-actualization as a model for educational excellence, factors undermining self-concept and persistence, supersensitivity and excellence, the relationship between mental illness and giftedness, effects of a summer honors academy on bright high school students' self-concept, the emotional price of overlapping syndromes, at-risk gifted young adults: a longitudinal study in progress, the Pyryt Mendaglio Self-Perception Survey, academic acceleration, development of artistic identity, rechanneling misdirected gifted energy, parental expectations: precursors for societal competence and leadership capacities, and loss of empathy as an emotional price of cognitive excellence. (DB)

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ED 386 906

The Fifth Annual
Esther Katz Rosen Symposium
on the
Psychological Development
of Gifted Children

THE EMOTIONAL PRICE OF EXCELLENCE

Abstracts of Selected Papers

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GIFTED YOUNG WOMEN'S INTENTIONS TO PURSUE CAREERS IN SCIENCE

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There is a severe underrepresentation of females in science and science-related careers. Consequently, there is a need to identify what factors determine young women's intentions and influence their behaviors with regard to the decision to pursue a career in science after graduation from college. If we can determine what factors influence decisions to pursue or not to pursue careers in science and at approximately which grade or age level these decisions are made, interventions can be designed to provide the necessary support needed to allow young women to select science careers. This study used the theory of planned behavior as the theoretical framework for investigating the factors that influence gifted young women's intentions to pursue a career in science.

Participants were 150 females in grades seven through twelve, 25 students per grade. Each grade sample was drawn randomly from those females who had been identified by the schools as gifted.

Using the Theory of Planned Behavior model a questionnaire was developed to elicit from the young women their intentions to pursue or not to pursue a career in science. Additional information was gained by examining both the perceived positive and negative consequences of pursuing a career in science that were generated in the study, the significant others the young women felt would or would not offer support for their career decisions, and the perceived resources and barriers to their choice of science as a career.

While this study found several factors that influence young women's intentions to pursue a career in science, of equal importance were findings of fallacies and unrealistic notions about preparing for careers in science that were held by the participants. These findings can help teachers and counselors be aware of the inconsistency that may exist between the young women's aspirations and their academic preparation. In addition, there is a need for dissemination of career information and early intervention from guidance counselors, teachers, parents and other significant referents.

RELATING SELF-AS-LEARNER SCHEMAS TO AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORIES OF LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT: INCREMENTAL OR ENTITY

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In trying to better understand how achievement is influenced by a person's implicit theory of intelligence, the current work attempts to examine whether these theories act as self-schemas. Dweck and Elliott (1983) defined two implicit theories of intelligence termed incremental (views intelligence as malleable) and entity (views intelligence as stable). To determine if a person's theory influences responding in a reaction time task, we recorded undergraduate students' answers and response latencies to incremental and entity statements. Some support has been found for the idea that implicit theories act as self schemas. Entity statements differentiated students who were classified as either incrementalists or entitists according to Dweck and Leggett's 10 item forced choice questionnaire (1988). More specifically, entitists agreed to entity statements faster than incrementalists. To determine if a persons theory guides autobiographical memories for school related events, students were asked to recall academic memories over a three week period of time. This naturalistic examination attempts to further link theories of intelligence with achievement. These findings have implications for examining the patterns of achievement in gifted and at-risk children by serving to establish the relationship between implicit theories of intelligence, autobiographical memories and self-schemas.

LIVING IN FEAR:

ACADEMIC PRESSURE AND IMPACT ON JAPANESE STUDENTS

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This paper explores the tremendous pressure Japanese students must endure in the pursuit of academic achievement. It identifies the sources of student's pressure, and discusses the cultural, social, and economic conditions that influence a fiercely competitive educational system. The focus of this paper is the psychological impact of academic pressure on students. Special attention is given to the problems of bullying and school related suicide. The paper takes issue with the overemphasis on academic achievement and argues for the purpose of education to include much more.

Japanese education is a single-minded drive for achievement that results in what many refer to as examination hell. The entrance examination is the root of all student's pressure, and is the primary mechanism responsible for driving competition. The life-long implications of student's performance on this single examination are far reaching. As a result, the pressures that are exerted upon students to achieve are overwhelming. Mothers, teachers, peers, and society all contribute to the pressures that are placed on students, while many them continue to fall victim to psychological and physical harm.

HONORING DIVERSITY: MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING PRACTICES FOR GIFTED MINORITIES

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A session designed to help educators increase their awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of gifted minorities students, and effective multicultural strategies that help nurture and encourage these students.

This presentation aims to develop a sense of awareness and sensitivity to the social/emotional needs of gifted minority students from culturally diverse backgrounds. The significance of this topic is evidenced in the extent of this population's needs and the lack of insight that often exists among counselors as they strive to create a framework for success with these students. Gifted minority students are often faced with double obstacles; their identity and being gifted.

Sometimes gifted minority students aren't recognized as talented or able because their gifts lie in areas that are celebrated by their ethnic group but not by western society generally (Schmitz and Galbraith, 1985). The gifted child who feels alienated and different, now has to contend with other significant factors.

The first step in developing a trusting counseling relationship is in learning to increase one's knowledge about different cultures, broadening one's insights, and a willingness to become acquainted with multicultural counseling skills. It is imperative for counselors to explore their own biases and values, and to reflect on these values, as these values can and will affect the development of a healthy counseling relationship. A general lack of understanding and awareness on the part of counselor prevents the establishment or a relationship based on trust and support from being established. This is a critical component in the counseling relationship.

Effective multicultural counseling aims to acknowledge and celebrate cultural diversity. As we learn to appreciate the values and belief systems of different cultures, we can then become more effective in our roles and better advocates for our students.

COPING STRATEGIES AND GIFTED ADOLESCENTS

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Coping strategies, techniques for adaptive action in response to environmental stresses, are very important for gifted adolescents because such youngsters need tools to deal with their heightened sensitivity, intensity, perfectionist tendencies, and desire to be in control. A study in Australia of gifted and average adolescent coping strategies using Frydenberg and Lewis Adolescent Coping Scales revealed several surprises. Gifted adolescents use fewer coping strategies than average students when dealing with personal and general problems that involve emotional investment, although they often demonstrate greater cognitive flexibility on academic problem solving. They also use somewhat different strategies from their normal peers. Research by Tomchin, Callahan, Sowa, May, Taylor and Plucker (1995) on coping patterns of American Adolescents revealed quite similar patterns.

In addition, stories of coping with a variety of problems were collected via structured interviews from 78 gifted adolescents. These reveal how the individual deals with particular problems, often ones common to the gifted population. Some of these stories will be shared. But there is no single right way of coping, only ways that resolve the difficulty for the individual.

This research will be discussed relative to the personality traits and strengths common to gifted children. Suggestions will be made about helping these students to develop a vocabulary of coping strategies, particularly related to power and social relationships and to coping with change.

The Adolescent Coping Scale and Coping Questionnaire were given to approximately 300 grade 6-10 students attending a summer program for the gifted in a Chicago suburb. About half of these students attended on scholarship, and were from low SES families. Some interesting differences emerged between this group and their more affluent counterparts, which will be discussed as well.

PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTOPSIES OF THREE GIFTED STUDENT SUICIDES: A WORK IN PROGRESS

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In 1994, three students associated with a state supported residential high school for gifted students committed suicide. In response to these suicides, The Task Force on Responding to and Preventing Adolescent Suicide was formed. The Task Force is a multidisciplinary team of professionals including school personnel, counseling psychologists, and educational researchers. The Task Force has six primary goals: (1) to develop and maintain an information base regarding adolescent suicide; (2) within that database, to focus on psychological problems and suicide of gifted and talented adolescents; (3) to support the school as it strives to deal with the fallout from the suicides; (4) to investigate the suicides and provide an objective evaluation of their relevant antecedents; (5) to make suggestions for policy change or program development that may reduce the likelihood of future suicides if the evidence suggests that policies and/or programs in the school were in any way related to the suicides; (6) to make suggestions for policy change or program development that will guide administrative decision making if future suicides occur. A subcommittee of the Task Force was formed to investigate the suicides of the three students associated with the school. To that end, psychological autopsies of each of the three suicides are being conducted.

We are utilizing the methods of psychological autopsy to address several areas potentially relevant to the three suicides related to the school. First, what predisposing conditions existed? This question focuses on psychological, familial, environmental, and social factors that existed prior to the suicides. Here, the study attempts to create a biography of each victim. Second, what conditions allowed the suicide to occur? This question investigates more specifically the distinct factors such as educational policy, training, family dynamics, social structure, and relationships that might be utilized to prevent future suicides from occurring. Our intent is to garner data that will inform the school and the research in gifted education in four areas by identifying: (1) potential risk factors for other students; (2) policy changes that will decrease the likelihood of future suicides; (3) currently unaddressed factors associated with the suicides that need to be considered; and (4) things were done well and should be continued.

THE INFLUENCE OF EARLY LANGUAGE ENRICHMENT ON MOTIVATION FOR COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

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Can early enrichment in language have any influence on motivation for learning? Can special experiences in language during early infancy contribute to the development of intrinsic motivation that facilitates the long-term acquisition of competence?

Prior presentations of our ongoing follow-up research have discussed how our early language enrichment programs established exceptional language and cognitive skills that gradually evolved into later patterns of giftedness and multiple high competencies, ranging from language, math and science to social skills, sports and the arts. By high school, among 40 participants located (of 44) from college-educated families from largely Anglo-Canadian backgrounds, 68% were identified as gifted, while among 16 Participants (of 31) from high school or less educated families from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, 31% were identified as gifted. Moreover, from 70% to 93% of the former group and from 44% to 81% of the latter group enjoyed exceptional competence across a variety of domains. No controls (for Afro-Caribbean Participants) were gifted and only 20% to 30% had high competencies.

The effects of early enrichment appear not to have been limited to producing superior skills in language and other domains, however. The methods of language enrichment employed were highly interactive, designed to arouse interest and foster initiative and autonomy in the give and take of relations in activities aimed at promoting both the social and referential uses of language.

This paper explores how this form of language interaction in the original early enrichment programs appeared to induce high levels of interest and self-direction in learning. Among the findings at follow-up: about 93% of students from college-educated families and 88% of those from high school (or less) educated families were independently motivated intellectually (only 10% of the Afro-Caribbean controls were intellectually independent); ratings on initiative, follow-through, frequency of participation, autonomy and other dimensions of motivation were generally high to very high across students' areas of special interest; and (on still limited Ns) significant relations appear between the quality of parent-infant interaction at 16 months and SAT scores at follow-up and between participants' autonomy scores at 16 months and at follow-up. This pattern of self-directed motivation and intellectual independence was apparently rooted in self-direction for learning that compounded the advantage of the early superior language and other cognitive skills established through the enrichment program.

GIFTED ADOLESCENT GIRLS: THE QUEST FOR BALANCE

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This presentation will include an overview of Eccles (1987) Expectancy-Value Model of Achievement Behavior. Data collected from research on gifted students in Utah will be presented in light of this model. These data will include: 1) results from interviews with 13 gifted high school students about course taking patterns; 2) survey results from 500 gifted junior high school students regarding career interests and perceived influences on career choices.

The literature in reference to gifted girls suggests that they have multiple talents and interests which need to be addressed (Kerr & Grist-Priebe, 1988). These data suggest that this multipotentiality may lead to a desire for social, emotional, and educational balance in course selection and subsequent career planning. This presentation will suggest that value systems unique to gifted girls must be taken into account in terms of course offerings and career counseling.

PSYCHOLOGICAL INTENSITIES IN YOUNG GIFTED CHILDREN

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The purpose of this study, which is present in process, is to document how emotional sensitivity and intensity are demonstrated in young gifted children. Toward that end, the questions for this study are: (1) How are the different emotional intensities exhibited in the classroom?; (2) How do these intensities impact the child's education?; (3) What strategies are successful in helping these children deal with their sensitivities?

Emotional sensitivity and emotional intensity is well documented in gifted children. Dabrowski studied the mental health of intellectually and artistically gifted youths. He proposed that their sensitivity and emotional intensity is part of their psychosocial makeup. Instead of viewing it as a neurotic imbalance, he viewed it as a positive potential for further growth. Dabrowski proposed that this sensitivity and emotional intensity provided the gifted individual with increased developmental potential. "There is among gifted individuals a greater intensity of feeling, greater awareness of feeling, and a greater capacity to be concerned."

This concept of developmental potential includes talents, special abilities, and intelligence; plus five primary psychic components: psychomotor; sensual; intellectual; imaginational; and emotional. These five areas may be considered ways of experiencing or channeling information. Dabrowski called them forms of psychic overexcitability to underline how they provided enhancement and intensification of mental activity much beyond the normal.

Those who work with gifted children often find instant recognition of these forms of overexcitability, for they provide a theoretical model that makes sense out of the feeling and behaving of their students. Studies have been done using adolescents and adults describing how overexcitabilities are exhibited, but little work has been done that looks at these overexcitabilities in young gifted children. A search of the Educational Resources Information Center Database reveals one.

A qualitative case study method is being used to describe how the overexcitabilities are exhibited in five young gifted children. Children were selected to provide an example of each type of excitability. The case study method allows for indepth observation and data collection to provide documentation of how each overexcitability is exhibited in each child. The case studies will also describe how teachers in the classroom identify and help children deal constructively with these overexcitabilities.

Dabrowski's theory provides a model that displays the connection between talent development and personality. Documenting how emotional intensities are exhibited in individual children can help teachers of gifted students better understand and address the needs of young gifted children.

THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF MINORITY STUDENTS IN GIFTED EDUCATION: PITFALLS AND PROMISES

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Students of color are seriously under-represented in gifted programs nationally. Yet, few articles, book, and studies have focused specifically on gifted African American and other students of color. Of the scholarly works that address this population, the vast majority focus on identification issues, such as instruments and practices that promise to increase the representation of students of color in gifted education. A major shortcoming in this body of work is that it stops at identification.

This session focuses on key issues regarding the recruitment and retention of students of color in gifted education. The primary objective is to encourage and empower educators, counselors, and psychologists to increase their efforts to recruit (i.e., identify and place) minority students into gifted, and to retain them once recruited. The session will also present findings from a study that explored gifted Black students' perceptions of factors influencing their achievement, motivation, and socio-emotional development.

Recommendations regarding teacher training in gifted education and multicultural/urban education are presented, along with other suggestions that address promising practices for recruiting and retaining these students.

DEVELOPMENTAL DIFFERENCES IN META-ATTENTION CONTROL: IMPLICATIONS FOR GIFTED AND AT- RISK CHILDREN

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The present study assessed developmental differences in elementary school children's knowledge about their attention, termed meta-attention control. This research explored what children know about sharing their attention. In addition, we assessed the impact of person, task, and strategy variables on children's judgments about how they would perform in a situation requiring them to share their attention between two tasks. The results indicate that children at all grade levels understand the impact of certain variables, such as motivation level. However, first graders, as compared with fourth graders thought that differences in the levels of the variables, such as looking strategy, amount of practice, or mental energy, would result in bigger differences in performance. We are currently expanding this area of research by examining children's meta-attention control in both domain specific and domain general tasks. More specifically, by investigating an area in which certain children are gifted and therefore have better understanding of their attentional processes, we might be able to apply this knowledge to intervention programs for children at risk. These findings have implications for the study of different populations, such as gifted children and children at-risk in terms of their meta-attention control abilities and the attributions they make in attention tasks.

IT'S LAKE WOBEGON AND "SMART DOESN'T COUNT FOR MUCH": AN INVESTIGATION OF SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR SCIENCE-TALENTED RURAL GIRLS

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This study investigated the correlates of enduring interest in science in 220 rural (50% of the sample lived in towns with populations under 1,000) science-able adolescent females. Girls and their parents responded to questions about self-perceptions of their abilities in science and math, and about family and peer support for continued interest in science careers. Preliminary path analyses revealed that having friends who share an interest in science and parents who believe you are talented in science are related to receiving good grades in science, but only parents' values and parent-perceptions and self-perceptions of science ability are related to the desire to continue in science. When parent and peer support are pitted against each other, only parent support predicts to science-career aspirations in this sample of alented adolescent females.

SELF-ACTUALIZATION: A MODEL FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a useful model for understanding motivation. Until an individual's needs are fulfilled at the lower levels, i.e., physiological, safety, and love, little psychological energy is available to be allocated to the higher levels of esteem and self-actualization. In other words, if people feel unloved or do not value themselves, they are not likely to possess the motivation or confidence to recognize their creativity and talents, much less put them to some purposeful use. This is of particular concern for gifted students, who are frequently viewed as being different in ways that are not well understood or accepted. The results can be serious, both emotionally and intellectually. Insight gained through the assessment of self-actualization and its precursor needs may make it possible to develop methods that will help all students, particularly those who are gifted, enhance their motivation to excel. Assessment instruments, personal research, and review of the literature will be discussed.

FACTORS THAT CAN UNDERMINE THE SELF-CONCEPT AND PERSISTENCE OF BRIGHT CHILDREN

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I will present three recent studies that we have conducted on the achievement-related beliefs of late elementary and middle school students. Although these studies were not designed to focus on gifted students, they have implications for understanding why some gifted children may not perform up to their potential. Specifically, the first two studies help us understand why some extremely bright and academically successful children can seriously underestimate their intelligence (i.e., smartness). The third study shows that even when children believe that they are very smart, they may hold other maladaptive beliefs that can adversely affect their task engagement and persistence in school.

The first study was designed to extend Herbert Marsh's internal/external frame of reference model of self-concept of ability. Our data suggest that even when children perform well in both math and reading, they may lower their self-concept of ability in math if their math achievement is lower than their own reading achievement (and possibly vice versa). This can lead their math self-concept to be unrealistically low. In the second study, we examined whether 5th graders differentiate among various ability-related self-perceptions (e.g., report card expectancies, perceived "smartness") within academic domains. We found that they did. The implications are that even when children rate their academic achievements as excellent, they do not necessarily believe they are smart.

In the third study, we examined how children's task engagement and persistence are influenced by the combined effects of how smart they think they are and their beliefs about how much smartness is necessary to succeed in school. This study was influenced by the work of Carol Dweck and by the work of Ellen Skinner and colleagues. We found that most children showed the greatest task engagement and persistence (as rated by teacher) when they believed that a moderate amount of smartness was necessary for academic success. Engagement and persistence were lower when children believed that success required either very low or very high levels of smartness. Importantly, the children who seemed to be the most adversely affected by the belief that very high levels of smartness are necessary for success were the children who rated their own smartness very high. Thus, even children who believe they are smart are not buffered from the debilitating effects of believing that you must be very smart to succeed.

SUPERSENSITIVITY AND EXCELLENCE

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A small amount of definitive research and a great deal of naturalistic observation have led to the belief that supersensitivity (often characterized as intensity, or sensitivity or overexcitability) is a primary characteristic of gifted. In the literature, sensitivity, intensity, and overexcitability are used to describe sometimes overlapping and sometimes distinct behaviors or characteristics. For the purposes of this paper, sensitivity will be defined as receptivity, awareness or the ability to react to cognitive or emotional stimuli. Intensity refers to the depth, duration, frequency or strength of a response. Supersensitivity then, is as an extreme receptivity or awareness marked by great intensity. Finally, overexcitability is the characteristic mode of mental functioning or dimension of personality (psychomotor, sensual, intellectual, imaginational or emotional) in which a supersensitive person reacts.

Dabrowski's concept of developmental potential -- the interaction of intellect, talents and abilities, and overexcitabilities -- is used as the theoretical foundation to propose a research agenda which addresses the question of how supersensitivity and its expression (overexcitability) relate to definitions of giftedness, the pursuit of excellence, and the emotional price of excellence. Research questions might include:

1. Is it true that gifted/creative people are supersensitive?
2. Can supersensitivity be used as an identifier of giftedness?
3. Can overexcitabilities be used as indicators of giftedness?
4. Is supersensitivity seen as a positive characteristic?
5. What role does supersensitivity play in the differing definitions and perceptions of excellence?

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MENTAL ILLNESS AND THE GIFTED; IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FIELD

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Currently, a small body of research and literature appears to be emerging showing a variety of relationships between mental illness and giftedness. Through an extensive literature search and review, the author has explored the implications of this material as it may impact current and future work in the field. The findings are far reaching and startling in some areas such as the more concrete information linking manic-depressive illness to highly talented and creative individuals. Researchers like Webb and Lind have already presented information relating and contrasting Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder with the gifted. Along with this information, the author intends to present a growing base of research making more inferences and claims correlating some notion of relatedness between the two.

The intent of this research lies in the history of the gifted population being mis-diagnosed with pathology due to their non-conventional nature and seemingly deviant behaviors. This author believes, as leaders and researchers in the field of gifted, it is imperative to explore and conduct further inquiry into this current trend. Unfortunately a substantial portion of the research being conducted on this matter arises from those not typically associated with gifted research. The author, concerned with what may occur without the involvement of knowledgeable persons from the field, hopes to raise the consciousness of leaders and researchers working with the gifted on this topic.

The research linking mental illness and the gifted presents multiple implications beginning with prevention in the social-emotional realm regarding early identification of symptomatology. Understanding the relationship could possible lead to early diagnosis of mental illness through gifted typology or rule out a diagnosis of pathology. The author foresees this type of differential diagnosis possible in the future with more collaboration between the fields of Medicine, Psychology and Gifted.

Another implication of this research needing inquiry involves the area of identity formation and self-concept development. Information relating the gifted to mental illness has in the past year entered the media, particularly with the work of Kay Redfield Jamison. Jamison is the author of Touched with Fire, a book linking manic-depressive illness to highly talented writers, artists and musicians. Jamison has also been featured in a public television documentary and a feature article in the Washington Post Magazine along with numerous other publications around the country. As more research material like Jamison's infiltrates mainstream culture without consideration given to the perceptions generated about the gifted and mental illness, the more likely negative and/or generalized perceptions could occur. It can be difficult to develop a strong and affirming sense of self as gifted when the environment surrounding that person has such negative connotations or is mis-informed. The more research disseminated linking mental illness to the gifted without scrutiny from within the field of gifted, the more potential there is for harm to occur.

Treatment and diagnostic methodologies can be greatly effected through better understanding and exploration of the relatedness between the two. Without this type of research, the author proposes grave errors are made. Gifted people run the risk of mis-diagnosis when seeking psychological and sometimes medical attention. The author will also show how few, if any, treatment methodologies have been designed for or inclusive of the gifted.

Participants for this presentation are asked to come prepared for discussion and inquiry. The author recognizes that this topic is of a highly emotional and controversial nature and asks that participants be sensitive to themselves and others while participating. It is the hope of this author to begin a more open and fluid dialogue within the field of gifted on this crucial and under-explored topic.

EFFECTS OF A SUMMER HONORS ACADEMY

ON BRIGHT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' SELF CONCEPT

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In 1986, the Kansas Board of Regents establish the Kansas Regents Honors Academy for High Achieving Youth, an intensive one month summer program designed to provide an advanced academic environment for high school juniors and seniors-to-be. The 150 students were to be selected from a slate of nominees chosen by their high schools on the basis of grade point average, scores on standardized achievement tests, evidence of creative and critical thinking, an original essay, and recommendations from two teachers. Nominees are then selected competitively by a coordinating committee of faculty and staff from the six Regents Universities where the program would be held on an rotating basis each summer.

More precisely, the mission of the program was (and is), according to the original proposal:

1. to reduce the number of bright high school dropouts
2. to attract more bright students to Kansas postsecondary schools
3. to challenge participants' thinking and reasoning skills
4. to motivate participants "to stretch their minds and reach for new ideas"
5. "to provide the stimulus of their intellectual peers"
6. "to promote their emotional and intellectual growth which can be shared with those around them."

To help assess the correspondence between program goals and outcomes, this writer has worked with Academy staff each year over the past eight years. (The program is now in the third year of the second cycle, with Pittsburgh State University hosting the students this summer). A combination of written and observation data is obtained each year and reviewed in order to:

1. determine if the Academy has done what it said it would do each year (and if it should continue), and
2. provide diagnostic information about the program to the Regents schools, particularly the one hosting the following year's Academy

The proposed presentation will look at the results of a longitudinal review of the eight years of evaluations from an additional perspective as they reflect trends in the perceptions of exceptional students about the effects of the Academies on their self perception.

The focus of the paper will be on answering the question, "Do programs such as the Kansas Regent's Academy provide a useful means of bolstering gifted students' confidence?" It is assumed that the information gathered from students can be reviewed with this question in mind as well as the original questions about the program's efficacy. In addition, a review of the effects of the feedback on subsequent programs will be provided. In addition to program documents, reports by the various program directors will be reviewed for evidence of these changes.

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FRIENDSHIP STATUS AND SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT IN GIFTED PREADOLESCENT FEMALES

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The theoretical basis for this project is derived from two areas: the preadolescent chumship theory of Harry Stack Sullivan and the literature regarding the lower level of achievement of highly capable females when compared with highly capable males.
To determine whether there is a relationship between academic achievement and having a best friend who is also gifted, information was gathered from 111 fourth graders enrolled in gifted programs at the time of their participation. The Mannarino Chumship Checklist provided information regarding the students' relationships with best friends; the "My Friends and Family" questionnaire provided information regarding students' close friendships, and school records added information regarding students' achievement test and intelligence test scores. Use of the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Children allowed examination of six self-concept scores, including five domains (scholastic competence, social acceptance, athletic competence, physical appearance, behavioral conduct), and an overall "Global Self-Worth" Score.
For statistical analysis, students were divided into three groups, those who did not claim to have a "best" friend, those who had best friends not identified as gifted, and those whose best friends were reported to be gifted. Statistical procedures revealed that the gifted students who participated in this study were significantly different from students not identified as gifted in some self-concept areas but not all. Students who reported having a best friend who was not identified as gifted displayed lower scores in scholastic competency and global self-worth than either those who reported not having a best friend or those whose best friends were also gifted. No differences were found between boys and girls.

BEHAVIOR PROFILES: EXPANDING THE VIEW OF GIFTED STUDENTS

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Gifted children have generally been seen as an undifferentiated group. When they are differentiated, it is usually on the basis of intellectual ability. However, emotional, social, behavioral, and cognitive characteristics are intertwined and influence each other. Thus, the gifted child must be viewed as a complex interaction of abilities, behaviors, emotions, and needs.

Roeper (1982) proposed five types of gifted children based on the approaches gifted children use to cope with their emotions. Others have focused their studies on one aspect of development or area of achievement or interest. However, none of the former studies synthesize the interactions of emotional, social, cognitive, and physical characteristics. A theoretical model, "Profiles of the Gifted and Talented" (Betts and Neihart, 1988) offers six differentiated profiles of gifted children. The profile types are: the successful, the challenging, the underground, the drop out, the double labeled, and the autonomous.

This presentation will provide an overview, an assessment instrument, and suggestions for specific uses.

EMOTIONAL PRICE OF OVERLAPPING SYNDROMES

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This session discusses the emotional stress and educational and parenting difficulties which occur when the innate characteristics of giftedness and creativity are confused with other diagnoses such as ADHD, LD, and ED (Cramond, 1990; Lerner, Lowenthal, & Lerner, 1995; Lovecky, 1990; Silverman, 1993; Webb & Lattimer, 1993). The result is what Cramond (1990) refers to as the theory of overlapping syndromes where it is a possibility that exhibition of the same behaviors could result in two very different diagnoses (p. 196) with two disparate interventions. Overlapping characteristics such as intensity, hyperactivity, inattentiveness, and daydreaming will be the focus of a review of the literature and will provide a springboard for a research agenda to examine the key distinctions among each of the overlapping paradigms.

"I'M THE SAME', "I'M DIFFERENT":

GIFTED STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS OF FITTING IN AND STANDING OUT

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Assessments of gifted children have, by necessity, focused on the readily verifiable and quantifiable aspects of the children's abilities and achievements. Debates have raged about the exact nature of the best measurement devices (standardized tests, portfolios, classroom behaviors, teacher and parent rating scales, etc.). Yet, little attention has focused on the children's perceptions of their educational experiences. I attempted to go beyond standardized testing and portfolio assessment, by adding to a comprehensive battery (SB:IV, KTEA, TOWL, SB:LM, school records, teacher reports, and portfolio assessments of products) an interview with each child, using, with permission, a modified form of the Delisle Questionnaire (Delisle, 1984). I chose questions based upon the criteria that they: (a) tap each of the areas represented in the original questionnaire, (b) not include the label "gifted," as many of the children had not been labeled, and, (c) be open enough to encourage discussion.

This paper will focus on the responses of six children, from first to fourth grade, who represent two distinct groups. Three children, classifiable as gifted, had records of strong school achievement and had intellectual test profiles that included one area score over 132 and, at least, two subtest scores at or above the 98th percentile. Three other children, classifiable as extremely gifted, also had documented high academic skills and intelligence test profiles that included one area score over 147, and, at least, four subtests over the 99th percentile. These three children, when retested on the Stanford-Binet:LM had scores above 170, a level often designated as exceptionally gifted (Gross, 1993; Lovecky, 1994).

Responses of the children were remarkable for the content of their answers and for the intensity of the affect that accompanied the responses. Topics to be discussed include the children's view of themselves as similar to and different from other children, their degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with school activities, the type of suggestions they offered for altering school activities and their own, self-selected topics for further exploration.

SIXTEEN AT-RISK GIFTED YOUNG ADULTS AND FOUR DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESSES: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY IN PROGRESS

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In 1992, thirty-one at-risk gifted young adults were invited to participate in a longitudinal study of post-high-school young-adult development. All had participated in their local gifted program. Criteria for the "at-risk" designation were underachievement, family situations that might interfere with future academic success, or depression.

Sixteen accepted the invitation, and, since then, have been sent the same fourteen-item questionnaire six times, asking for numerical self-rating and verbal elaboration in four areas of development: the processes of differentiating from family, developing intimacy in a relationship, establishing career direction, and developing autonomy. Questions asking for self-perceived level of conflict with parents and siblings and distress over issues related to extended family were intended to determine level of differentiation. Those asking for self-perceived level of independence in major decision-making, level of trust from others regarding decision-making, and level of independence regarding laundry, food, finances, taxes, and purchases were designed to elicit level of autonomy.

At the outset, in order to assess possible contributing factors to problems with differentiation, all participants took the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale and three assessments associated with the Circumplex Model of Marital and Family Systems (Olson, 1990): FACES III (Olson, Porter, & Lavee, 1982), Family Satisfaction, and A Stress Scale for Couples and Families. In general, low satisfaction with family relationships, high family stress, low family cohesion, and extremes in family adaptability characterized this group at the outset of the study. Five scored well below the mean on the Piers-Harris. Conflict and stress were associated with an inability to concentrate on academic work and a low level of career direction.

The working hypotheses have been that difficulty with one or more of the four developmental challenges helps to sustain underachievement, that accomplishing one or more tasks begins movement into an achievement mode, and that a convergence of task-accomplishments is likely to result in greater achievement and satisfaction. According to the data already gathered, maturity in a relationship and resolution of conflict with parents are frequently experienced within six months of graduation. However, at the present time, only six individuals have achieved clarity in career direction. All participants have had some college, but only three have had three full years of college, two of those being former extreme underachievers now with high GPAs. Two still rate themselves low in maturity of relationship, and five are still low in autonomy. Of the eight instances where more than one strand converged, seven showed a high concurrent level of ability to concentrate on academic work, including all seven where conflict had been resolved. Maturity of relationship was one of the converging strands in each case.

THE PYRYT MENDAGLIO SELF-PERCEPTION SURVEY:

THE ASSESSMENT/INTERVENTION CONNECTION

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Rationale

Recent empirical literature (Byrne, 1984) has provided support for a new conceptualization of self-concept. This conceptualization, which was introduced by Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (1976) views self-concept as a multidimensional construct consisting of dimensions such as academic self-concept, social self-concept, and physical self-concept. This conceptualization has led to new instrumentation (Harter, 1982; Marsh & O'Neill, 1984). One problem with the new instrumentation, however, is the sole reliance on psychometric criteria for item selection. Items on self-concept inventories are selected based on their unique loadings on hypothesized factors. Inventories lack a theoretical orientation toward self-concept formation.

There are three unique orientations toward self-concept development. The first theoretical orientation which is derived from the sociologists, Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934), is known as the refected appraisals approach. This perspective suggests that self-concept is formed by our perceptions of what we think individuals who are important to us (significant others) think about us. The second theoretical orientation which derives from Festinger (1954) is known as the social comparison approach. This perspective suggests that self-concept develops in relation to our observed comparison with peers on performance measures. If we see ourselves as performing better at academic tasks (by making better grades) than peers, we see ourselves as smart. The third theoretical orientation is known as the attribution approach (Kelley, 1972). It suggests our self-concept is formed when we label our behavior.

Self-concept comparisons between gifted and average students (e.g. Coleman & Fults, 1982; Janos, Fung, & Robinson, 1985; Karnes & Wherry, 1981; Kelly & Colangelo, 1985; O'Such, Havertape, & Pierce, 1979; Winne, Woodlands, & Wong, 1982) generally favor gifted students. The major problem with the research reported is the typical focus on global self-concept (Schneider, 1987). These studies also lack a theoretical perspective.

Purpose

The purpose of this presentation is to describe the latest developments of the Pyryt Mendaglio Self-Perception Survey, which addresses self-concept from a multidimensional and multi-theoretical perspective. Five dimensions of adolescents' self- concept--academic, social, athletic, physical appearance, and trustworthiness are assessed using an instrument that incorporates three theoretical perspectives on self-concept development (reflected appraisals, social comparison, and attribution). Suggestions for integrating assessment results with intervention strategies will be provided.

ACADEMIC ACCELERATION:

EMOTIONALLY PRICEY OR PRICELESS?

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In 1991, I completed a research synthesis on academic acceleration, collecting all published research on 11 forms of acceleration: (1) early entrance to school; (2) grade skipping; (3) nongraded classrooms; (4) compacting; (5) subject acceleration; (6) grade telescoping; (7) concurrent enrollment; (8) mentorship; (9) Advanced Placement; (10) early admission to college; and (11) credit by examination. For the 312 studies collected, Effect Sizes could be calculated on 81 of the studies about the socialization and about the emotional adjustment of gifted students for seven options. For the unquantifiable studies, however, a further analysis was required to determine if this larger number of studies might impact the initial effects reported. A "best-evidence synthesis" was conducted to prioritize and weight all quantitative and non-quantitative studies. In general, the best-evidence synthesis indicated that socialization was substantially and positively impacted when gifted students were grade skipped or were "treated" to a combination of accelerative options (radical acceleration). Emotional adjustment was substantially improved when gifted students were allowed to enter school early, be grade skipped, be mentored, and allowed to enter college early.

In this presentation, a summary of the social and emotional effects of acceleration will be discussed; the additional data collected from studies that could not be quantified will also be shared. The actual studies, the instrumentation used, the research designs themselves will be critiqued, and a research agendum for further research on social and emotional impacts of acceleration will be proposed. The information presented represents a secondary analysis of the 1991 work, unreported elsewhere, and will update with research studies published after the 1990 limit set in the initial study.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ARTISTIC IDENTITY

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An ongoing study of the development of talent and creativity in a group of young artists (grades 2-12) focuses on the childrens' productivity in a private after-school art program. The children discussed their art and the experience of being an artist and a creator in videotaped interviews. The young artists revealed their reaction to and evaluation of the paintings produced during the two or more years of classes. In their discussions about the motivations for creating art and for choosing subject matter, the young artists described a tension between having fun and meeting self-imposed challenges. This qualitative study captures the interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as well as the students' perceptions of their own artistic development and evolution as an artist and a creator. The presentation offers a summary of the reflections of the elementary school-aged children as well as a sampling of case studies.
See you soon, Susan

IMPLICATIONS OF A CHANGING PARADIGM

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Under the functionalist paradigm, educational programs for gifted and talented children fit the structure well — a separate, self-contained, categorically supported program to address particular needs presented by an identifiable population within the school. Identification with the field of special education made sense because that field had perfected a categorical service delivery model. Pull-out programs, special classes, special teachers, IEPs, etc., seemed to provide a natural path for the distribution of resources to accelerate the intellectual development of children at the mastery end of the learning curve just as the other sub-categories addressed the special needs of children closer to the entry level of the curve. Now all that is changing. The constructivist paradigm is moving in and the functionalist paradigm is exiting stage left. Categories are collapsing in one another as if spiraling toward an organizational black hole. Distributive resources for mastery-end children will be commingled with other categorically identified resources to be integrated and coordinated for the benefit of all students at the school. Ownership of these resources will be shared by the community as a whole through school-community partnership arrangements. Resource utilization will be assessed against both proximal and distal outcomes. There will be no more pull-out and no more special. The original aims envisioned in the gifted program agenda are likely to be better realized in the school unification process since mastery-end children will have access to the combined resources of a broad range of special assistance programs.

RECHANNELING MISDIRECTED GIFTED ENERGY

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Traditional definitions of giftedness are strongly entrenched in today's society. Identified students usually reflect the definitions of giftedness valued by the mainstream culture defined as well behaved, highly motivated students from acculturated environments who are socially adjusted to mainstream values. However, lack of identification for a gifted program and accompanying services does not eliminate giftedness. Giftedness does not dissipate; it is often redirected through unacceptable social behaviors.

Negative societal practices such as neglect, abuse, abandonment, can cause those characteristics usually measured by traditional identification practices to become hidden or dormant. Innate creativity is often redirected in an attempt to get personal needs met. The resulting actions sometimes manifest themselves in unacceptable behaviors which are potentially destructive to both the child and society.

The demand for programmatic changes to address the needs of non-traditional gifted students is surfacing. Educational methodology has been developed and refined during the past decade which enhances the understanding of nontraditional giftedness. Counseling approaches must now be developed which can assist these individuals by providing appropriate affective support and direction.

Children were studied whose misdirected energies placed them at risk for self-harm and resulted in an acute psychiatric crisis. The children's frustrations and resulting behaviors were examined by a psycho-educational assessment team. The team's observations indicated that many of these children had a high potential for giftedness which was manifested through self-destructive means. The unacceptable behaviors correlated with a recognition of the child's attempts to meet personal needs and goals as defined by Maslow and Erikson. The team documented the relationship between these needs and the undesirable behaviors and then worked with both the child and the family to reduce environmental stressors, as well as recognize the impact of cause and effect on behaviors. The team's methodology, observations, and recommendations will be presented as an emerging alternative for providing affective support for children with these characteristics.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS: PRECURSORS FOR SOCIETAL COMPETENCE AND LEADERSHIP CAPACITIES

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The quality of the process of parent and child interactions, from birth through early adulthood, sets the foundation from which certain capabilities manifest during adulthood. "Parental Expectations" investigates the influences of parenting upon the qualities of competence that are highly sought by society. These qualities, also known as leadership, include creativity, high level of physical energy, productivity, affability, insightfulness, confidence, resillence, and dependability (Campbell, 1991, 1985).

The leadership qualities are compared via a multiple regression analyses to three sets of parenting styles: a) authoritative, wherein parents are warm, loving, supportive, conscientious, respectful and willing to set expectations and offer affirmations; b) authoritarian, wherein parents are coercive, power driven, demanding, shouting, non-encouraging, and unsympathetic; and c) permissive, wherein parents are non-controlling, non-demanding, and either neglectful or overly indulgent; they often ridicule, withdraw love, shame their children or allow excessive freedom and privileges (Baumrind, 1991, 1978).

The overall research objectives include: (1) identification of the levels of societal competence and leadership behaviors manifested among college freshmen and seniors who are matriculated at institutions of higher learning in South Carolina; (2) identification of patterns of parenting styles and socialization processes perceived by the student subjects to have been practiced by their parents; (3) comparison of resultant patterns of parenting styles with identified levels of competence and leadership behaviors; (4) comparison of levels of societal competence with family of origin geographic region to determine differences of levels between the rurally and non-rurally socialized; and (5) determination of the pattern of parenting that most significantly elicits the highest levels of competency behavior.

For 186 predominantly African-American students, the significant research fin dings indicated that the father's intensity of rejection or acceptance affected leadership, affability, resilience, and dependability. The mother's acceptance or rejection showed variance in leadership and energy outcomes. The psychological balance of parental control with autonomy increased dependability. Intense psychological control indicated diminishment of resilience.

Differences between male and female students showed that men scored higher in leadership and energy while women scored higher in affability, dependability, and resilience. Conclusions for this subject pool suggested that early years socialization is related to adult leadership capacities.

Findings from students enrolled at a second university (N137) will be discussed and contrasted in depth.

CORRELATES OF ANXIETY:

TALENTED STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS, MOTIVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES IN AN INTENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

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Despite the many resources that academically gifted adolescents may bring to scholastic pursuits, recent research indicates that many such students experience stress and anxiety in academic contexts. Moreover, little systematic research is available describing talented students' experiences of intensive academic programs. We examine the correlates of academic anxiety and confidence in two independent samples. In Study 1, 442 participants in Duke University Talent Identification Program (TIP) 1993 summer residential programs were grouped by the degree of confidence or anxiety they reported at the beginning of the program. Students who reported feeling anxious (22% of the sample) at the start of the term reported less positive anticipations about their course, higher course challenge, an externalizing attributional style, lower motivational processes, and more disappointment in their accomplishments, while confident students (54% of the sample) reported the opposite patterns. In Study 2 we replicated and extended these results with 347 participants enrolled in TIP's 1994 summer programs. When compared to confident students, anxious students again reported less positive perceptions of the course, an externalizing attributional style, and lower motivational processes. However, dimensional analyses unexpectedly revealed that increases in anxiety, when accompanied by at least moderate levels of confidence, were associated with positive increases in most of the academic dimensions we assessed. Collectively, these findings suggest that multiple emotional dimensions may codetermine academic experience, and that anxiety may function as an inverted U, with academic motivation, positive experience, and performance increasing with moderate levels but decreasing with very high levels of anxiety.

Portions of these data were presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, April 4-8, 1994.

IS THE LOSS OF EMPATHY AN EMOTIONAL PRICE OF COGNITIVE EXCELLENCE?

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Until children are able to empathize with the cognitive and affective experiences of others, they are limited to their own psychological lives. Both theory (e.g., Hoffman, 1989) and empirical results (e.g. Duggan, 1978 and Strayer, 1989) support the optimal onset of the development of empathy as occurring during the second decade of life, due to increased cognitive abilities such as decentering, abstracting and relativistic thinking. In adults, work by Benack (1984 & 1988) does show increased cognitive development to be associated with higher empathy. The current work examined the possibility that, compared to teenagers of normative intellect, cognitively gifted adolescents are more empathetic due to richer cognitive development.

Two studies were undertaken to examine the issue of gifted adolescents' empathy. In the first study, correspondence analysis of empathy measured using the Measure of Emotional Empathy (MEE, Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972) of 136 adolescent subjects' and mothers' responses concerning her adolescent's empathy revealed two dimensions: gender and cognitive control. Thus, Study 1 supports the existence of a cognitive dimension in adolescent empathy in general. For the second study, subjects were 64 adolescents matched for age, gender, SES, ethnicity, education and giftedness. Empathy was measured using the MEE and analyzed by chi-squared. Several comparisons showed significant differences between gifted and nongifted adolescents. The results, however, were surprising: Gifted adolescents were consistently lower in empathy, Gifted male adolescents scored very low in empathy while nongifted males scored moderately. In addition, gifted females scored moderate levels of empathy compared to high levels of empathy in nongifted female adolescents.

Extremely low empathic responding, as in the case of the gifted boys of this sample, does point to a possibly harmful lack of socioemotional development, to psychosocial isolation, and to affective impoverishment. On the other hand, very high levels of vicarious emotional responding, as in the nongifted female adolescents of this sample, also may not be psychologically healthy. Therefore, instead of being a price to be exacted from gifted female adolescents, the reduction in empathy to moderate levels may be an emotional benefit of cognitive excellence.